

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-3 (canceled)

Claim 4 (currently amended): A honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases, comprising:

a plurality of columnar porous ceramic members each having a partition wall and a plurality of through holes, said through holes extending in parallel with one another in a length direction of said columnar porous ceramic members, said partition wall separating said through holes and configured to filter particulates in an exhaust gas, said through holes of each of said columnar porous ceramic members including ones sealed at an inlet side of said columnar porous ceramic members and ones sealed at an outlet side of said columnar porous ceramic members such that the exhaust gas enters from the inlet side, passes through the partition wall and flows out from the outlet side; and

an adhesive layer combining said columnar porous ceramic members with one another and formed by drying an adhesive paste including a pore forming material which forms a plurality of pores adjusting a thermal capacity per unit volume of said adhesive layer, the adhesive paste including the pore forming material in an amount such that said thermal capacity per unit volume of said adhesive layer becomes lower than a thermal capacity per unit volume of the porous ceramic members,

wherein the pore forming material comprises at least one of a balloon and a thermally decomposable resin material.

Claim 5 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 4, wherein the thermal capacity per unit volume of the adhesive layer is set to 90% or less of the thermal capacity per unit volume of the porous ceramic members.

Claim 6 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 4, wherein the thermal capacity per unit volume of the adhesive layer is set to 20% or more of the thermal capacity per unit volume of the porous ceramic members.

Claims 7-9 (canceled)

Claim 10 (currently amended): A honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases, comprising:

a ceramic block comprising at least one columnar porous ceramic member, said columnar porous ceramic member having a partition wall and a plurality of through holes, said through holes extending in parallel with one another in a length direction of said columnar porous ceramic member, said partition wall separating said through holes and configured to filter particulates in an exhaust gas, said through holes of each of said columnar porous ceramic members including ones sealed at an inlet side of said columnar porous ceramic members and ones sealed at an outlet side of said columnar porous ceramic members such that the exhaust gas enters from the inlet side, passes through the partition wall and flows out from the outlet side; and

a coating material layer formed on a circumferential face of said ceramic block and formed by drying a coating material paste including a pore forming material which forms a plurality of pores adjusting a thermal capacity per unit volume of said coating material layer, the coating material paste including the pore forming material in an amount such that said thermal capacity per unit volume of said coating material layer becomes lower than a thermal capacity per unit volume of the porous ceramic member,

wherein the pore forming material comprises at least one of a balloon and a thermally decomposable resin material.

Claim 11 (original): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 10, wherein the thermal capacity per unit volume of the coating material layer is set to 90% or less of the thermal capacity per unit volume of the porous ceramic member.

Claim 12 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 10, wherein the thermal capacity per unit volume of the coating material layer is set to 20% or more of the thermal capacity per unit volume of the porous ceramic member.

Claims 13-15 (canceled)

Claim 16 (currently amended): A honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases, comprising:

a ceramic block comprising a plurality of columnar porous ceramic members, each of said columnar porous ceramic members having a partition wall and a plurality of through holes, said through holes extending in parallel with one another in a length direction of said columnar porous ceramic members, said partition wall separating said through holes and configured to filter particulates in an exhaust gas, said through holes of each of said columnar porous ceramic members including ones sealed at an inlet side of said columnar porous ceramic members and ones sealed at an outlet side of said columnar porous ceramic members such that the exhaust gas enters from the inlet side, passes through the partition wall and flows out from the outlet side;

an adhesive layer combining said columnar porous ceramic members with one another and formed by drying an adhesive paste including a pore forming material which forms a plurality of pores adjusting a thermal capacity per unit volume of said adhesive layer; and

a coating material layer formed on a circumferential face of said ceramic block and formed by drying a coating material paste including a pore forming material which forms a plurality of pores adjusting a thermal capacity per unit volume,

wherein the adhesive paste includes the pore forming material in an amount such that the thermal capacity per unit volume of said adhesive layer is adjusted to be lower than a thermal capacity per unit volume of the columnar porous ceramic members, ~~[[and]]~~ the coating material paste includes the pore forming material in an amount such that the thermal capacity per unit volume of said coating material layer is adjusted to be lower than the thermal capacity per unit volume of the columnar porous ceramic members, and the pore forming material comprises at least one of a balloon and a thermally decomposable resin material.

Claims 17-31 (canceled)

Claim 32 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 4, wherein said plurality of pores is formed by incorporating the pore forming material which forms independent pores in said adhesive layer.

Claim 33 (currently amended): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 32, wherein said pore forming material comprises at least one material selected from the group consisting of ~~a foaming agent~~, inorganic balloons and organic balloons.

Claim 34 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 4, further comprising a catalyst supported in at least one of said columnar porous ceramic members.

Claim 35 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 10, wherein said plurality of pores is formed by incorporating the pore forming material which forms independent pores in said coating material layer.

Claim 36 (currently amended): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 35, wherein said pore forming material comprises at least one material selected from the group consisting of ~~a foaming agent~~, inorganic balloons and organic balloons.

Claim 37 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 10, further comprising a catalyst supported in said ceramic block.

Claim 38 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 16, wherein the thermal capacity per unit volume of the adhesive layer is set to 90% or less of the thermal capacity per unit volume of the columnar porous ceramic members.

Claim 39 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 16, wherein the thermal capacity per unit volume of the adhesive layer is set to 20% or more of the thermal capacity per unit volume of the columnar porous ceramic members.

Claim 40 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 16, wherein said plurality of pores is formed by incorporating the pore forming material which forms independent pores in said adhesive layer.

Claim 41 (currently amended): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 40, wherein said pore forming material comprises at least one material selected from the group consisting of ~~a foaming agent~~, inorganic balloons and organic balloons.

Claim 42 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 16, wherein the thermal capacity per unit volume of the coating material layer is set to 90% or less of the thermal capacity per unit volume of the columnar porous ceramic members.

Claim 43 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 16, wherein the thermal capacity per unit volume of the coating material layer is set to 20% or more of the thermal capacity per unit volume of the columnar porous ceramic members.

Claim 44 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 16, wherein said plurality of pores is formed by incorporating the pore forming material which forms independent pores in said coating material layer.

Claim 45 (currently amended): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 44, wherein said pore forming material comprises at least one material selected from the group consisting of ~~a foaming agent~~, inorganic balloons and organic balloons.

Claim 46 (previously presented): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 16, further comprises a catalyst supported in said ceramic block.

Claim 47 (new): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 4, wherein the pore forming material comprises a thermally decomposable resin material that is decomposable upon heating and capable of forming the pores in the adhesive layer.

Claim 48 (new): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 47, wherein the thermally decomposable resin material has one of a spherical shape, an oval shape, a cubic shape, an unfixed lump shape, a column shape, and a plate shape.

Claim 49 (new): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 47, wherein the thermally decomposable resin material has a spherical shape and an average particle size of from 30 to 300 μm .

Claim 50 (new): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 4, wherein the pore forming material comprises an inorganic balloon.

Claim 51 (new): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 50, wherein the inorganic balloon is one of an alumina balloon, a glass micro-balloon, a shirasu balloon, a fly ash balloon, and a mullite balloon..

Claim 52 (new): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 4, wherein the pore forming material comprises an organic balloon.

Claim 53 (new): The honeycomb filter for purifying exhaust gases according to claim 52, wherein the organic balloon is one of an acrylic balloon and a polyester balloon.